Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1598

CONFIDENTIAL NAIROBI 8275

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KE, UG, ECON

SUBJECT: GOK OFFICIAL ON STATUS OF KENYA/UGANDA CROSSBORDER

SHIPMENTS

REF: STATE 193587

- 1. IN COURSE OF AUGUST 5 CALL AT DEFENSE MINISTRY, DCM QUERIED PERMSEC KIEREINI ON QUESTIONS SET FORTH REFTEL. WHILE KIEREINI WAS UNABLE TO GIVE SPECIFIC PERCENTAGES OR QUANTITIES, HE PROVIDED FOLLOWING INFORMATION.
- 2. KIEREINI CLAIMED THAT SHIPMENTS OF NONSTRATEGIC GOOD (I.E., EXCLUDING MUNITIONS, ARMAMENTS, AVIATION FUEL) WERE BEING PERMITTED TO GO TO UGANDA AT "NORMAL" RATES. HOWEVER, UNAVAILIBILITY OF DRIVERS TO TRUCK GOODS INTO UGANDA WAS IN FACT RESTRICTING DELIVERES BELOW NORMAL AS SHIPMENTS BY TRUCK ACCOUNTED FOR "SUBSTANTIAL" PORTION OF TOTAL MOVED BY RAIL AND ROAD. THIS, HOWEVER, WAS NOT A "BLOCKADE."
- 3. AS FOR AVIATION FUEL, KIEREINI SAID THAT (AS EMBASSY HAD PREVIOUSLY REPORTED) GOK CONTINUES TO RESTRICT DELIVERIES AND PERMITS DELIVERIES ONLY BY TRAIN. HOWEVER, RECENTLY TWO "ENTERPRISING" ASIAN FIRMS HAD BEGUN TO "SMUGGLE" AVIATION FUEL INTO UGANDA BY TRUCK. HE IMPLIED THAT GOK WOULD BE TAKING ACTION TO STOP THESE SHIPMENTS. CONFIDENTIAL

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4. HE SAID KENYAN DRIVERS DEFINITELY UNWILLING TO DRIVE TRUCKS INTO UGANDA OUT OF FEAR OF BEING ROBBED OR EVEN KILLED. HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW WHO HAVE BEEN WILLING TO TAKE THESE RISKS IN EXCHANGE FOR LARGE SUMS OF MONEY.

5. RAIL SHIPMENTS ARE MADE BY KENYAN-OPERATED TRAINS ONLY AS FAR AS MALABA ON BORDER. AT THAT POINT, TRAINS ARE TAKEN OVER BY UGANDAN PERSONNEL WHO TAKE THEM TO DESTINATION WITHIN UGANDA AND SUBSEQUENTLY RETURN THEM TO MALABA.

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